

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) An endodontic instrument comprising:

an elongated shaft having an upper end and a lower end;

a stop permanently fixed to said shaft at a distance between 6-8 mm from said lower end;

a cutting head located along said shaft adjacent said lower end, wherein said cutting head has an annular cutting surface extending about a first circumferential portion of said cutting head and a flat non-cutting surface extending about a second circumferential portion of said cutting head. ~~wherein said cutting head has a cutting surface.~~

2. (original) The endodontic instrument as claimed in claim 1, wherein said stop is permanently fixed to said shaft at a distance between 6.5-7.5 mm from said lower end.

3. (original) The endodontic instrument as claimed in claim 2, wherein said stop is permanently fixed to said shaft at a distance between 6.75-7.25 mm from said lower end.

4. (original) The endodontic instrument as claimed in claim 3, wherein said stop is permanently fixed to said shaft at a distance of approximately 7 mm from said lower end.

5. (original) The endodontic instrument as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a pointed tip provided at the lower end of said shaft.

6. (original) The endodontic instrument as claimed in claim 1, wherein said stop is rigid.

7. (original) The endodontic instrument as claimed in claim 1, wherein said shaft has an exterior surface including an annular groove and said stop is at least partially secured in the annular groove.

8. (canceled).

9. (currently amended) The endodontic instrument as claimed in claim—8 1, wherein the flat non-cutting surface of said cutting head tapers inwardly between the upper and lower ends of said shaft.

10. (original) The endodontic instrument as claimed in claim 9, wherein the flat non-cutting surface tapers inwardly at approximately 4-6 degrees.

11. (currently amended) The endodontic instrument as claimed in claim—8 1, wherein the annular cutting surface of said cutting head has cutting edges formed therein.

12. (original) The endodontic instrument as claimed in claim 1, wherein said cutting head has a cross-section diameter that is greater than a cross-sectional diameter of said shaft.

13. (original) The endodontic instrument as claimed in claim 1, wherein said stop is circular.

14. (original) The endodontic instrument as claimed in claim 1, wherein said stop has a polygon shape.

15. (currently amended) An endodontic instrument adapted for accessing a pulp chamber of a molar comprising:

an elongated shaft having an upper end and a lower end;

a pointed tip provided at the lower end of said shaft;

a rigid stop permanently fixed to said shaft at a distance between 6-8 mm from said pointed tip;

a cutting head located along said shaft adjacent said pointed tip, wherein said cutting head has ~~an annular~~ a spherical cutting surface extending about a first circumferential portion of said cutting head and a flat non-cutting surface extending about a second circumferential portion of said cutting head.

16. (currently amended) The endodontic instrument as claimed in claim 15, wherein the ~~annular~~ spherical cutting surface of said cutting head has cutting edges formed therein.

17. (original) The endodontic instrument as claimed in claim 15, wherein said stop is fixed to said shaft at a distance between 6.5-7.5 mm from said pointed tip.

18. (original) The endodontic instrument as claimed in claim 17, wherein said stop is fixed to said shaft at a distance between 6.75-7.25 mm from said pointed tip.

19. (original) The endodontic instrument as claimed in claim 18, wherein said stop is fixed to said shaft at a distance of approximately 7 mm from said pointed tip.

20. (original) The endodontic instrument as claimed in claim 15, wherein when accessing the pulp chamber of said molar, said stop is adapted for abutting against a cusp tip of said molar for limiting forward movement of said cutting head so as to prevent said cutting head from passing through a floor of said pulp chamber.

21. (original) The endodontic instrument as claimed in claim 15, wherein said shaft has an exterior surface including an annular groove and said stop is at least partially secured in the annular groove.

22. (new) An endodontic instrument comprising:

an elongated shaft having an upper end and a lower end;

a pointed tip provided at the lower end of said shaft;

a rigid stop permanently fixed to said shaft and spaced from said pointed tip;

a cutting head provided at the lower end of said shaft adjacent said pointed tip, wherein said cutting head has a spherical cutting surface extending about a first circumferential portion of said cutting head and a flat non-cutting surface extending about a second circumferential portion of said cutting head.

23. (new) The endodontic instrument as claimed in claim 22, wherein said pointed tip protrudes from the spherical cutting surface of said cutting head.